



WHY RENEW 0.25% SALES TAX TO BE SHARED BY FORT SMITH FIRE DEPARTMENT?

JANUARY 17, 2012

FIRE STATION 11 OPERATIONS

- Twelve additional firefighters will be needed to meet minimum staffing
- Includes operation and maintenance of fire station
 - Utilities
 - Maintenance
- One-time purchase of personal protective equipment to equip each new firefighter

AERIAL APPARATUS STAFFING

- Current aerial apparatus staffing below recognized standards
 - The current staffing level of our aerial apparatus is two (2)
 - All other comparable fire departments staff their aerial apparatus with a range from three (3) to five (5) firefighters
- Safety issue
- Will help improve overall fire insurance rating. Fort Smith's staffing score is currently only 43% of the total possible points for staffing.

COMMAND STAFFING

- Severely understaffed for workload and area of responsibility
- Not enough Fire Marshals to adequately perform duties
 - The FSFD has two (2) Fire Marshals assigned to the Fire Prevention and Investigation Division
 - That is a per capita ratio of one (1) for every 43,000 residents
 - The average for all other comparable cities is one (1) for every 18,000 residents
- Investigations and education suffer
- Succession planning in jeopardy
- Positions becoming very hard to fill due to very specialized training and workload

TRAINING

- The FSFD has no dedicated program to cover firefighter training
- All costs associated for training must come from other area of the fire department budget
- Without a consistent funding stream for firefighter training, firefighter and public safety are at greater risk

TRAINING CENTER CONSTRUCTION

- The FSFD does not have a training facility to conduct live fire training or other operational drills to meet National Fire Protection Association or Insurance Services Office requirements
- 90% (45 out of 50) of all regional fire departments have a dedicated multi-use training facility
- The FSFD spent over \$20,000 in overtime last year traveling to other cities to use their training tower and burn room
- Will serve multiple agencies including the Fort Smith Police Department

APPARATUS REPLACEMENT

- From 2001 through 2007 the FSFD replaced one (1) fire apparatus each year
- Since the economic downturn in 2008, we have only replaced one (1) fire apparatus in the last five (5) years
- No funds are dedicated each year for fire apparatus replacement – must come out of the general fund
- Will provide a steady source of funding for long term apparatus replacement while minimizing the negative impact to the general fund for such large capital expenditures

WHAT DOES RENEWAL OF THIS 0.25% DO FOR ME?

- Ensures the likelihood that Fort Smith keeps its ISO 2 rating (not causing an immediate rise in our fire policy insurance rates)
- Provides necessary training and equipment to keep firefighters safe
- Ensures rapid emergency response times throughout Fort Smith
- Keeps our tax rates the same